



The Florida Gator Tale

Newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the Motorcycle Sport Touring Association

Volume 11 Issue 4

Events in April 2018

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Feature Article

Father and Son Reconnect on an Alpine Ride

By [Oron](#)

[Ed: This article was originally posted December 29, 2016 in the [Ride Reports - Day Trippin'](#) section of the [ADVRider.com](#) forum at:

*advrider.com/index.php?threads/father-and-son-reconnect-on-an-alpine-ride.1195181/
It has been slightly edited for publication. All photos by the author unless stated otherwise.
Click on photos for higher resolution versions.]*

This is the story of how I attempted to reconnect with my 21-year-old son through motorcycling. Although I never encouraged motorcycling in his youth due to the perceived danger, his genetic inheritance prevailed and he started riding at age 16. Like fathers and sons through the ages, we butted heads for many years during his adolescence. I was particularly unhappy with some poor choices he had made. As he matured and began to make better choices, I hoped to get back in his life in a meaningful way and decided an exotic motorcycle trip was just the vehicle. With months to plan, I knew we both had a ten day

window available before he went back to college. I asked him whether he would be interested to tour the Alps with his old man this coming August.

His response, “On two bikes, right?”

“Of course.” At 6’3” and 190 lbs, I wasn’t about to consider sharing a motorcycle with him.

“A tour group?”

“On our own.”

“Do I get to pick the bike?”

“Yes, but it better be suited to our needs.”

“I don’t want to do museums or sightseeing.”

“No museums. It’s all about riding... and eating.”

“Ok, I’m in.”

I was thrilled to book our adventure.

I normally don’t bother with trip insurance, but with an unpredictable 21-year-old and the high expense of summer airfare and two motorcycle rentals, I thought it would be prudent. Then there was the matter of renting a \$20,000 motorcycle to a 21-year-old in a foreign country. In offering The Son a ride choice, he suggested renting for himself an S1000RR or Panigale, but I convinced him that we needed saddlebags and that I wouldn’t be able to keep up with him on such a machine. The old man scrapped a few pegs back in the day, but do we

really want to get into another competitive spiral? The Son already owned a Yamaha R1, so the choices were not as insane as it may sound, but I needed to emotionally (and physically) survive this trip. How about matching R1200GSs? He agreed. Through the internet, I found a German outfit that would rent us two nearly new water-cooled R1200GSs from [Munich](#) for seven days. As long as I co-signed, all was cool. I sprung for the optional vehicle insurance. I also wanted The Son to ride the GS and experience the advantages of a predictable (safer) bike that better fit his frame. Anything to get him off the R1.

I had an Airbnb reservation for the first night in Munich, but the rest of the trip was to be semi-unstructured. The plan was that we would ride pretty much all day, only stopping for lunch. Then when we were tired in the late afternoon, we would locate lodging and look for a nice restaurant. Get up the next morning and do it all over again. The overall route was to head south from Munich towards [Garmisch-Partenkirchen](#), cross into [Austria](#), and then over the [Timmelsjoch Pass](#) into Italy. Go deep into the Italian Alps, then head East over the [Giau Pass](#), then into [Slovenia](#), then back to Austria and the mighty [Grossglockner](#), [Salzburg](#) and back to Munich.

This is the travelogue of that trip.

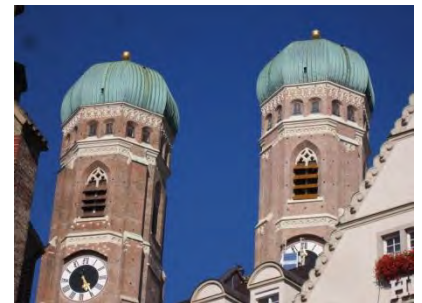
We flew overnight direct from Boston on [Lufthansa](#). I was up all night watching bad movies; The Son slept like a baby. He somehow folded himself into our tight economy seats. After dropping off our stuffed duffel bags at our suburban Munich Airbnb host, we took the train back to Munich Zentrum to sightsee and later meet an old friend for dinner.



This was late lunch near [Marienplatz](#).

Mmmm, good German pork.

Three hours later at the [Hacker-Pschorr Biergarten](#), we had another big meal. Did I mention that The Son likes to eat... a lot? Our waitress was a good sport. The Son's expression says it all.



The next morning we met the taxi early to go to [Kawamotors](#) to pick up the bikes. We both had a little time to kill so we ogled the MV Augustas in the showroom. The rental company was based in Frankfurt, so they had trucked our BMWs to Munich a day earlier. The paperwork took about half an hour and then we had to transfer our gear into the saddlebags.



I was so excited to finally get on the road that I forgot to empty a side pocket on my duffel bag and left all my underwear and socks behind. I selected the GS with the built-in Garmin since I was the navigator. I lamely tried to convert the language from Italian to English. How can you change the language when all the choices are in Italian? After 10 minutes of struggling, The Son took over and had it converted in 30 seconds. The dealership kindly stored our luggage in their basement garage for the week.



The original plan was to avoid the Autobahn and take side roads to the South. By the time we left the motorcycle dealer, it was already after 11 AM.

Within a few minutes, the Sena headset crackled, "I need food."

"Now? Don't you want to get on the road?"

"We never had a breakfast. I need food!"

Good point. Need to stay hydrated and healthy. By the time we finished lunch at a roadside deli (love the European breads), and got ourselves completely lost near the Olympic Stadium, it was past 2 PM and we hadn't even left Munich yet. This was not a good start of the trip. I saw a blue sign for the Autobahn South towards Garmisch-Partenkirchen and took it. Within minutes, we were on a superhighway with no speed limit, riding unfamiliar heavily loaded motorcycles.

After 10 minutes, the Sena barked, "Come on, let's go."

I was already doing about 115 KPH (71 MPH), but we were occasionally passed by cars doing around a 160 KPH (99 MPH) and this was apparently unacceptable to the younger generation. I pushed up to 130 (81), acclimating to the higher speeds.

"Is that it?"

"Yea, that's it."

I promised his mother I would get him back in one piece. It's a unique experience as a father to constantly check your mirrors to make sure that all is well behind you. If I crashed on this trip, it would have been because I was always checking behind me and not watching where I was going.

This is the stop along the Autobahn when I confirmed (with horror) that I had forgotten my underwear and socks. It's funny what plays through your head when you are on the highway. I replayed in my mind the previous hours and just knew I had forgotten something. I was not pleased about the prospect of recycling the same socks and underwear for seven more days, so we stopped in Garmisch-Partenkirchen to look for underwear. I found just what I was looking for ... for a king's ransom. Rather than my usual Costco sundries, I found the [Schiesser](#) outlet (what an ironic name for an underwear brand) and bought the highest end underwear and socks on the planet. My privates and feet never had it so good.

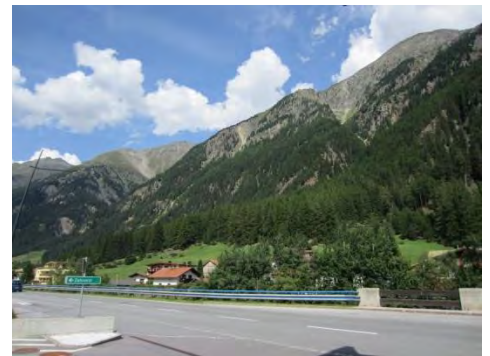


Notice that some crazy German laid down the rubber.

On the E-532 just past Garmisch-Partenkirchen. This was when we knew we were entering the Alps. We kept on the twisty roads that slashed up into the mountains.



We then took the B-186 to the [Timmelsjoch](#). The Timmelsjoch Hochalpenstrasse is a narrow toll road with 180 degree hairpins and massive elevation changes.



The vast expanse of alpine scenery was jaw dropping. The topography did much to explain why borders existed where they do and why different languages were spoken; without an iron horse

underneath me floating over paved roads, it would have been a major undertaking to cross these mountains. It was amazing to consider that only a few days earlier we were back home and dreaming of just such an experience.



It was a very long day and we were exhausted. After crossing the Pass, I was at my jet-lagged limit. We were starting to lose daylight. It was time to find shelter and food. We took a small side road into a mountainside village named [Stulles](#) and after two “no vacancy” attempts and subsequent controlled panic, we finally scored a room at the [Hotel Alpenland](#). It was with great relief when the Frau at the front desk said, “Jawohl, we have a room for you both.” Even though we were technically in Italy, everyone at the hotel spoke German exclusively. When I inquired, I was told that this area has always been German speaking and the reconfiguring of the border after World War II was culturally disregarded by the residents. This Hotel checked every box and then some.



At night we played the electronic shuffle. We needed to charge the GoPros, cell phones, cameras and Sena comms, all with only a single socket converter. I ended up waking in the middle of the night to swap devices; The Son slept soundly.



[Our view from the Hotel.](#)



[View in our room.](#)

We had a fantastic dinner (included in the rate, along with breakfast) and finished the evening with a contentious game of Ping Pong. I lost 2 games to 3. Yes, I know, a father-son competitive problem.

The next morning, we stopped in [St. Leonhard in Passeier](#) to exchange some dollars and buy more electrical converters (I needed my sleep). While I slipped into the bank and offered irrefutable proof of identity in case the Franklins were counterfeit, The Son and I somehow became separated. As crazy as it sounds, we really had no way to locate each other outside of email. It took a frantic half hour of circling the town to find each other. I had visions of driving to a police station to report a lost motorcyclist.



[GSs were parked in the garage for the night.](#)

After filling the tanks (his bike consistently took more fuel than mine based on riding style) we then took twisty Alpine back roads as far south as [Terlago](#) Italy and then northeast to the recreational area of Arabba.

We occasionally had fun with the lead rider passing slower moving vehicles in the limited passing zones and then reporting over the Sena to the second rider whether it was safe to pass in a subsequent blind corner. There were several instances where the car being passed must have thought the second rider had a death wish.



This entire region is a motorcyclist's dream. The roads were spectacular. This area of the world caters to skiers in the winter and motorcyclists in the summer. Arabba was pleasantly overrun with motorcycles of every description. We stayed overnight at the [Sport Hotel Arabba](#). They even had a large tent set up for covered motorcycle parking.



Before dinner, we went for a short hike up the mountains. The dinner and breakfast buffet were world class. You just don't get such food in the States. I think management may have lost some money on The Son as he ate the equivalent of three guests worth. The Son has come a long way in his appreciation of fine foods. When he was 12, we joined some friends and signed up for a very expensive buffet at the Chatham Bars Inn on Cape Cod. The buffet offered amazing seafood delicacies. The families all went up to the buffet to fill our plates. The Son returned to our table with a single \$65 hot dog sitting in the middle of his plate.

More scenery along the route.

This day was unfortunately where we had the first tension of the trip. There were numerous speed trap cameras set up in many of the small towns along our route. If The Son was leading the way, the speeds would tend to be excessive. I would constantly tell him to slow



down. I did not want to return to the US with dozens of speeding tickets arriving by mail. The Son was not happy to be told how to behave. Do you remember when just the sight of your parents bummed you out? Both of us were working hard to extinguish this sentiment, but suppressed emotions occasionally oozed out. I did my best on this trip to make him an equal partner in decisions, and of course, share lead rider opportunities. One does the best one can.

The following morning, we mutually decided to modify our original plan of motorcycle riding all day - every day and to take the morning off to ascend three connected gondolas to the highest accessible peak in the [Dolomites](#): The [Marmolada](#) (3,343 meters). After a hardy breakfast at the Sport Hotel Arabba, we had a short

but very exciting dash to [Malga Ciapela](#) to begin the ascent. The photos speak for themselves. It was like travelling to another planet.



The early afternoon was spent crossing the [Giau Pass](#). This is unquestionably one of the steepest passes in the Dolomites and was my quintessential motorcycling experience of the trip. We began the switchback climb behind a K1300 sporting one-piece leathers. In spite of our heavy bags and riding a dual sport, I was determined to try and keep on his pace. If it wasn't for the occasional traffic, I would not have been able to, but I thrashed that GS to within an inch of its life and had a ball doing it. I checked the mirrors and The Son was hanging tight. I knew he must have been grinning ear to ear. It's hard to express to non-riders the thrill of coming out of a turn and pouring on the power... curve after curve. But you all know what I mean. They just don't make roads like this in New England.



Lunch was at a roadside restaurant back down on the other side of the Pass. The afternoon was a haze of incredible riding. We mindlessly diced all the way into Slovenia before turning northwest into Austria and eventually backtracking to [Villach](#) for the night. We were so tired at the end



of the day that we gladly settled on the first vacant accommodation we encountered, a generic business hotel. Unfortunately, there are no photos of Slovenia or the small narrow pass into Villach, Austria. It was a very long day and it was all about the ride.

We spent the next morning crossing the mighty [Grossglockner](#). This toll road should be on every motorcyclist's bucket list. 'Nuff said! It's grandiose, it's majestic, and it's a hoot. There were countless bikers from all over Europe enjoying the cool sunbaked, high-altitude fun. We heard languages and saw license plates from all over the continent and beyond. We often whispered into the headsets to each other, "Can you believe this?"



By the afternoon, we needed to cool off and by chance we rode past the picturesque [Zell am See](#). We pulled into the parking lot and then spent several hours swimming and relaxing.

Back on the road, we looked for accommodations and found a room at the Hotel St. Hubertus. They offered their barn out back for covered parking.

It was here while checking email that we received the very sad news that The Son's grandmother had died. This news, although not completely unexpected, took the wind out of our sails and we cut the vacation short to return home as soon as possible.

We picked up our bags...



...and spent one last night in suburban Munich.

These Germans know how to party.



So all of sudden, it was over. This trip was a wonderful adventure for father and son, with a side element of emotional healing. It was immeasurably valuable to rebuild our relationship through positive shared experiences. Did these five days of motorcycling completely heal years of conflict? Of course not, but it was a great start. Whether laughing at lost underwear or playing ping pong, it was all good. Although The Son and I were occasionally at odds during the trip, it undoubtedly helped us reconnect. The trip is a memory that I will always cherish, although made bitter sweet with the passing of the Grandmother. (I dedicate this RR to the memory of Renée.) I hope that The Son and I will have the opportunity to do something like this together again soon.

Thanks for following along.

P.S. The Son eventually traded the R1 for a used R1200GS.

Accompanying Youtube videos for those in need:

- 🏍️ BMW motorcycle Alpine Tour Part I: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vla-e5mnRrM>
- 🏍️ BMW motorcycle Alpine Tour Part II: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ry_EYB9F1Jo
- 🏍️ BMW motorcycle Alpine Tour Part III: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=di38XsoitY8>

SAFETY TALK

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Ultimately, the safety of motorcycle riders and their passengers is their own responsibility. Nothing presented in the column supersedes, negates or relieves a motorcyclist and/or passenger from assumption of personal responsibility for their actions and safety.

Florida Riding - Not for the Faint of Heart

As we rode home from the latest MSTA lunch gathering yesterday in Nokomis, I realized I had promised Don an article by today. Fortunately it only took two miles from the restaurant to reach a decision.

In that first two miles I almost got hit twice by inattentive drivers. Really? Anyway, that got me thinking about some of the different hazards we face in Florida, from the rest of the U.S. riding areas...

Hazard #1 - Older drivers. You know them. They have achieved their life's goals. They have retired, moved to Florida, bought a big car and are driving to their pickle ball appointment, usually slow and in the left lane. Beware the pickle ball driver, as they have no clue, change lanes without warning, and will skewer you before they even realize they have wandered.

Hazard #2 - Foreign drivers. I am all for legal immigration and opportunity. However, when a foreigner brings their (usually atrocious) driving habits with them, the result is serious danger to all of us on 2 wheels. To them, a red light is a mere suggestion. My hat is off to our MSTA brothers in SE Florida. I don't know how you do it. I refuse to ride in the Ft Lauderdale/Miami area, except to carefully and quickly scoot through on the way to Key West!

Hazard #3 - Wildlife. Alligators, wild pigs, buzzards, LARGE turtles, deer, turkeys (yes, the wild ones will fly)...you name it, we've got it. If you ride in the rural areas of central Florida, be prepared for the indigenous, non-human residents.

Hazard #4 - Local Idiots. OK, these are everywhere in the U.S. However, it seems we've got more than our fair percentage of them. You can usually tell them by the age and condition of their vehicle. If there is a gun rack in the back window, especially if it's being used at the time, I advise caution.

Hazard #5 - Other Bikers. Notice I didn't characterize them as "Motorcyclists." I draw a distinct difference between the two. Motorcyclists, regardless of the brand loyalty, understand the sport, are considerate of other riders (again, regardless of the brand), wave a friendly greeting and even say "hi" at motorcycle gathering spots. "Bikers" on the other hand are interested in themselves and how their bike enhances...well, whatever they are trying to enhance. This is where I apply my own "Chrome Rule". The more chrome (or carbon fiber; the two are identical for this purpose), the more suspicious I become of their riding intentions. Maybe they just love chrome and they are actually accomplished, considerate motorcyclists. On the other hand, pass or be passed with caution when the Chrome Clown appears.

It simply comes down to this: We may not have the best roads in the country to ride, but we do get to ride them year round. There are good roads everywhere. Unfortunately, with our wonderful riding weather and good pavement also comes other highway users. It's up to everyone to keep a wary eye for that older, foreign, idiot weaving all over their lane, with their cell phone in their hand (almost forgot to mention that one!). Remember, just because you think you're an accomplished rider doesn't mean the idiot won't come for you! Pay attention out there, wherever and whenever you ride!

Ride Safe!

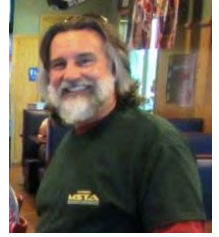
Doug Westly – Safety Editor

Florida News

South Director's Report

AH, MARCH CAME IN LIKE **JUNE**, THEN FELT LIKE **JANUARY**, AND LEFT LIKE **MARCH!!!**

We could not have had a better month for riding, nor stuffed another ride into the month!! Tom got things started with a ride to an old favorite right on the beach. Catch his terrific report below on [Coppola's Bar and Grill](#); you know it as the Sebastian Beach Inn.



Van VanSteelant

The next weekend found 20 riders and friends frolicking around in Ocala!! We had a great crowd, blue skies, chilly mornings, and just plain fun all days long!! The location proved to be the right choice, just like last year. We made our way to wonderful roads through bucolic rolling hills and horse estates! Our route master kept us very entertained all day Friday and Saturday. Sugar sand anybody...



Just a few days later, another crowd of rowdies rolled into the [1884 Restaurant and Bar](#) for our umpteenth Daytona Bike Week lunch ride!! Out-of-townies mixed it up with several locals and tried to empty the buffet... Another Chamber of Commerce Day for riding and enticing a few more snowbirds to see the "sunshine on my shoulders..." (sorry J. Denver) (See Tom Blake's report for more about this event.)

And then... 22 riders, friends and nair-thee-wells took over the courtyard table area at [Pop's Sunset Grill](#) in Nokomis!! Ten of us rode nearly 200 miles one way. We arrived in waves, keeping our promise to gather in groups large enough to take over a full table, as instructed. The staff was perfectly attentive. The food got rave reviews. And many riders hung around for nearly two hours!! Another double thumbs up event!!



As one can guess, our 50/50 raffle netted our winner a significant sum! New friend to the MSTA, Ray Harcourt, took home \$42. We added “our” share to our prior balance to hit \$941.00. As always, I **THANK** all of you who regularly contribute to our coffers. As I mentioned last month, we paid a few website bills. Then Go Daddy let us know of their “improvement plans”. All is good, but the dust hasn’t settled yet as to the full costs of the new upgrades. I will send out an email ASAP with the details so you will all know EXACTLY what was spent and why. We are blessed with sufficient funds to take advantage of their best promotions. Stay tuned...

What’s Next??

Be sure to check our RIDES calendar often to insure you never miss one of our events!! www.flmsta.org The ride dates for 2018 are currently set. The Central Ride destinations are set through May. The South Ride locations are set for the year as well. We have some new ideas and places in mind!!

The Central Lunch Ride, on Saturday the 7th, starts out our April with a ride to [Don Jose Mexican Restaurant](#), at 4731 Lakeview Dr., in Sebring!! Tom has pulled the trigger on a location change after two too many run-rounds with his prior choice. We may visit there later in the year, when they aren’t overrun by snowbirds...

The very next weekend, April 14th, the Southies make their way, way north, to the [Lone Cabbage Fish Camp](#) in Cocoa. We usually hit this stellar location once a year. If you haven’t made this ride before, join us and see what you’ve been missing!!

We crowded these rides into the first of the month because over the rest of the month features three out-of-state rides that many of you will want to consider. Two in GA, one in VA!! Check out our website for **ALL** of the details www.flmsta.org

Membership News

I have caught up with the latest membership print outs. I should have successfully culled the expired, and added the new members to my contact info. If you are receiving the Gator Tale, but not my announcements, PLEASE email me asap to correct my files. The last 12 months presented membership challenges for everybody in the Club. Because of the tenacious efforts of the Membership Committee, we should be starting 2018 with a clean slate and smooth riding!!

My heartfelt **THANKS** to Don Moe for his efforts EVERY month to bring our Florida membership up to date with all the news about our new and renewing members!!

Here’s what we know today...

We welcome these three new Florida riders who joined the MSTA in March:

Kurt Heide Robert Sauer Carlyle Swofford

We thank this Florida member for renewing his membership in March:

Frederick Christ

These nine Florida memberships will expire soon or have recently expired:

Douglas Christensen David Gerber Robert Shields
Rebecca DeShazo-Westly Pete Kauk Doug Westly
Robert Fischer Michael Porter Ed Zaslou

We urge all our members to renew their memberships and to continue supporting their MSTA. If you have a question about when your membership expires, please contact me at membership@ridemsta.com. Renewing or joining can be quickly and securely done online at PlanetReg.com/MSTArenew or PlanetReg.com/MSTAjoin

respectively. If you use a pre-printed form from STARreview or an ITR, be sure to mail it to Beth Hemstreet, 5560 Stone Church Court, Loveland, CO 80537, and not to the address of a prior membership director.

If you only want to update your phone, email, bikes, or other details, you can do so quickly via PlanetReg.com/MSTAupdate. Please include enough unchanging information to assure the correct member is updated in the database.

When you encounter a rider who would seem to be a good fit as a new MSTA member, please pass along one of our Invitation-To-Ride quad-folds! For each new member you recruit starting in 2018 and who provides your name and/or membership number on the application, you will receive a coupon for a raffle ticket for the motorcycle drawing at STAR in Wisconsin. STAR Bucks coupons have been discontinued and members still holding coupons should plan on redeeming them at rallies or other MSTA events before the end of 2018.

Random Ramblings!

When days like our last South Lunch Ride turn out so nicely, I get a little soft and gooey... It's cliché, but *it just doesn't get any better than being with a great group of riders* who gather over fine food and conversation at a spectacular location on a stupendous weather day... Thank you all for hanging out with us!!

STAR Registration and the Raffle Bike tickets are fully activated and ready for you!!

Just do it, now!!

Be sure to check out all of the photos from this month's rides!! Really... Four rides, four events worth of pictures!! We have several good photos amongst us, and they are very willing to share their efforts with us. Do them the honor of clicking through their collections and let them know how much you enjoy reliving the events... or that you wished you had simply joined the fun instead of whatever it was you were doing 😊 Oh yeah, at www.flmsta.org PHOTOS

Ride well! Ride often!! Do it safely!!!

ATGATT Van

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Central Director's Report - January 2018

After a hot and humid February (just unbelievable!), we finally got a nice cool down just in time for our March 3rd ride. Beautiful day. But strong, gusting winds from the north prompted James and Jenks from down south to quip that they could probably turn off their engines and just let the wind blow them home!



Tom Blake



Left to right – Doug, Nicole, Bill, Jenks, James and Robert. Tom on camera.

NO ONE was on the deck at *Coppola's Bar & Grille at the Sebastian Beach Inn* (SBI). We sat behind big windows looking out across the empty deck to a white-capped and turbulent ocean. Yes, we were all pleased to be comfortably inside.

Turnout was light. But we were a well-traveled group and there was no shortage of adventures to discuss. Somewhere in there, Bill and Nicole announced that they are moving out of state. Bittersweet. They've been regulars and have made a lot of friends. We wish them well and are envious that they'll soon be just minutes from the NC mountains. Hope to see them at Helen in April. Also, I can report that Robert now has a real motorcycle rear tire on his ST. Proud of you Robert. Kudos for the

long ride over. James and Jenks, too. And it was nice that Doug could join us again. He and I spent most of the afternoon just riding around.

Incidentally, the SBI has a storied past. It began in 1903 as a rescue station for seafarers in distress. During WWII it was a coastal watch station with lookout tower. It became the *Sebastian Beach Inn* after the war and famously served up its share of Bahama Mamas - a blend of fruit liqueurs and rums, including 151 proof. If you could drink three in a row you were allowed to write your name on the wall. I recall seeing mine there once although it might have been a forgery (hic). Anyways, the place fell into disrepair in the 1980's. Gary Coppola bought it and after extensive renovation, it reopened in 1990 under its current name.

The just-for-fun MSTA **Bike Week Lunch** on the 15th at the *1884 Restaurant and Bar* in Eustis drew a nice crowd. Of the nineteen who showed up, about half were from out of state. Oklahoma, Massachusetts, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee and Indiana were represented in addition to good ole Florida. Everyone seemed to

agree that it was a fabulous place. Their kitchen was slow but with all the banter and BS, no one seemed to mind except the ones who skipped breakfast. Thanks to previous Central director Teresa Vipond for finding this great

place for us last year. BTW, I ran into former North director Phil Ridgill and Carmel in Daytona later in the day and enjoyed a nice chat. They were doing well. Barely recognized him without his signature neckerchief on.



In addition to an eclectic set of attendees, check out the restaurant itself (although my camera does not do the place justice - tb)



Queuing up to go in on a cool, cloudless, sunny day.



From a raised floor, looking out over the railing and booths. Impressive bar in the background. Mezzanine seating on ends.

OK, on **April 7th** it's time to shift the spotlight back to central Florida. Our **lunch** will be at **Don Jose Mexican Restaurant**, 4731 Lakeview Dr., **Sebring**, FL 33870. Previously planned ride to Woody's River Roo was cancelled due to too many issues. Don Jose's is new to the MSTA although I've been there and found the setting on the west side of Lake Jackson, their paved parking, atmosphere, service and food all very appealing. Reservations have been made. Of course, everyone is invited. Come join us for another great Central lunch. See the Rides section of the newsletter or [website](#) for more details. And see you at **Don Jose's!** ¡Olé!

Safe journeys,

Tom Blake

Central Florida April Lunch Ride

Saturday, April 7th, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

[Don Jose Mexican Restaurant](#) ([map](#))

4731 Lakeview Dr.

Sebring, FL 33870

Tom Blake

MSTA Florida State Co-Director

Florida MSTAs Apparel

As a reminder, our Florida State Storefront is open online for your MSTAs-branded apparel! Go to mstaflorida.qbstores.com. We have made arrangements with the supplier for our National Gearbox to allow our State membership to buy shirts, hats, etc. with our State logos directly from the source!!! No muss, no fuss!! Order yours today!!



They offer both embroidery and digital print options. Click onto the Embroidered Apparel or Shop By Logo for each option. Don't hesitate to contact Queensboro directly with any and all questions. They are very customer friendly. They also offer Polo shirts and T-shirts with pockets!!

Florida Rides This Month

Important Note

Always remember to check the Florida MSTAs [Event Calendar](#) and/or your email for updates on scheduled rides. Changes in times, dates, and especially locations are often out of our control and with short notice.

[MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride](#)

When: Sat., April 7th, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [Don Jose Mexican Restaurant](#), 4731 Lakeview Dr., Sebring, FL 33870 ☎863-385-9326 ([map](#))

Description: Sorry, but the Woody's River Roo gig is off! Too many issues. Still focused this month on Gulf Coast riders, the new destination gets you out of city congestion for a nice country ride. Don Jose's is new to the MSTAs although I've been there and found the lakeside setting, paved parking, atmosphere, service and food all very appealing. Reservations have been made. Of course, everyone is invited. Come join us for another great Central lunch.

Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎321-723-2857

[MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride](#)

When: Sun., April 14th, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [Lone Cabbage Fish Camp](#), 8199 State Road 520, Cocoa, FL 32926 ☎321-632-4199 ([map](#))

Description: Yeah, this is rather north for the Southies... But, we have a wonderful route that keeps us entertained and hungry by the time we roll in. Besides, the Southies will have "crashed" a couple of the Central Gang's events by now. About time that they come out to one of ours!!

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Future Florida Rides

Note that the future ride events are included to facilitate longer term planning. The destinations and/or dates may be changed just before the ride dates. Please check the Florida MSTA [Event Calendar](#) for possible updates.

MSTA Florida Central Lunch Ride

When: Sat., **May 5th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: [Lake Harris Hideaway](#), 11912 Lake Park Rd, Tavares, FL ☎352-343-3585 ([map](#))

Description: This is an old favorite that we never seem to get tired of. It sits at the edge of Lake Harris with on-deck seating and a gorgeous view of the lake. They carry a good selection of appetizers, burgers, sandwiches, melts, salads and sides at reasonable prices.

Contact: Tom Blake, tblake1@cfl.rr.com, or ☎321-723-2857

MSTA Florida South Lunch Ride

When: Sun., **May 12th**, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

Where: MUSCLE CAR CITY LLC, 10175 Tamiami Trail, Punta Gorda, FL 33950 ☎ ([map](#))

Description: Here's the deal. They have moved to new digs this year. They are just a mile down the road from the prior location. We'll confirm that all is set for us to enjoy the cars AND the diner. Stay tuned...

Contact: Van, busavan@flmsta.org, or ☎561-386-2594

Regional Events

Dillard Dual-Sport Just-For-Fun

When: Fri.-Sun., **April 6th-8th**

Where: [Gateway Inn](#), 64 White Oak Ln, Dillard, GA 30537 ☎706-746-3585 ([map](#))

Description: A weekend of fairly easy Dual-Sport riding. Mostly two-track, lots of gravel, some rocks, some dirt. Weather should be mild/cool 50-75°F. There are a number of suggested routes to choose from and your hosts, Doug Pippin and Norm Kern will help you load your GPS. Soil in this area is sandy/loamy and drains quickly so there isn't much slippery mud. That said, there are areas that do not favor the large over 1000cc bikes.

\$70.00/room with 2 queen-sized beds. When you call to make your reservation, tell them you are with the MSTA group. The hotel is holding 10 rooms until March 25th.

GPS route files will be made available at the hotel. Norm will arrive about 4-5PM on Thursday to meet and greet everyone.

Contact: Norm Kern, nkern@kernvideo.com or ☎937-609-0931, for further information.

Doug Pippin, d_pippin_89@bellsouth.net

Information: The event webpage is available at msta-se.com/Dillard%20DS%202018.pdf.

Barret-Jackson in West Palm Beach

When: Thurs.-Sun., **April 12th-15th**

Where: South Florida Fair Grounds, 9067 Southern Blvd., West Palm Beach, FL 33411 ([map](#))

Description: Plan to visit the 16th annual auction, held at the S. Fl. Fairgrounds!! Multiple tents will be filled with artful, whimsy and truly collectable cars and more!! And the "ride along" experiences are worth getting there early each day!!

Information: Go to barrett-jackson.com for ALL the info about the show and ticket sales...

[Staunton Spring Romp - Dual-Sport & Street Ride](#)

When: Thurs.-Sun., **April 12th-15th**
Where: [Stonewall Jackson Hotel](#), 24 South Market Street, Staunton, Virginia, VA 24401 ☎540-885-4848 ([map](#))
Description: Staunton, VA provides an excellent location for motorcycle riders to gather and launch rides through the beautiful Virginia and West Virginia mountains and valleys. Street and dual-sport riding is available for your ride enjoyment.

The room rate will be \$119.00 per room/per night-parking included (single/double occupancy) plus applicable tax (Currently 12%). This is a \$60.00 room rate discount. If you want to enjoy breakfast at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel-be sure to add breakfast for an additional \$10.00 per night/per guest when you make your room reservation. You will be given breakfast vouchers for each morning when you check in to the hotel.

Contact: Galen Diehl, gediehl4@comcast.net
Information: The event webpage is available at msta-se.com/2018%20Staunton.pdf

[North Georgia Classic Just-For-Fun](#)

When: Fri.-Sun., **April 20th-22th**
Where: [Quality Inn](#), 15 Yonah Street, Helen, GA 30545 ☎706-878-2268 ([map](#))
Description: The 2018 North Georgia Classic will again be a Just-For-Fun event in Helen, Georgia. Dates for this year's event are April 20 thru 22, 2018. Event motel will be the Quality Inn in Helen with all rooms recently renovated. A block of rooms is being held at a \$99 rate for this event until April 10, 2018. Call ☎706-878-2268 and mention MSTA for your reservation.

Contact: Andray Hubble, jandrayhubble@mindspring.com or ☎256-572-2719
Information: The event webpage is available at msta-se.com/helen

[Riding Into History Bike Show](#)

When: Sat., **May 19th**
Where: [World Golf Village](#), 305 WGV Blvd., St Augustine, FL 32092 ☎904-940-6150 ([map](#))
Description: Once again, the big show comes to St. Augustine!!
Information: The event webpage is available at ridingintohistory.org

[MSTA Tri-STAR Rally](#)

When: Sat.-Mon., **May 25th-28th**
Where: [Alleghany Inn](#), 341 North Main Street, Sparta, NC 28675 ☎336-372-2501 ([map](#))
Description: A regional favorite!! Special room rate. We'll have a cookout Friday night, a catered dinner Saturday night, and make a trek down to the Mexican restaurant at the other end of town for dinner Sunday night.
Location: Sparta, NC – Excellent street riding in Blue Ridge Mountains of northwestern North Carolina.
Contact: Geoffrey Greene, hawkgrider@aol.com or ☎865-659-4755 (c) or 865-922-9887 (h)
Information: The event webpage is available at msta-se.com/tristar

For additional Florida events and information, [click here](#) to see the Florida MSTA website's Events page.
 The Florida MSTA chapter also has a presence on Facebook with upcoming events and past photos: [click here](#).
 We welcome articles and comments from our members for publication. Contact the editor at: editor@flmsta.org.
 The MSTA National [website](#) has extensive event information:

- 🛵 To join the MSTA or renew your membership: [click here](#).
- 🛵 For the sanctioned events: [click here](#).
- 🛵 For Just-For-Fun events in 2017: [click here](#).

National MSTA ridemsta.com

Florida MSTA www.flmsta.org

More Contact Information			
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ALL GRAPHICS WERE PROVIDED BY THE CREDITED AUTHOR, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.



This month's [Mystery Hyperlink](#) is related to the safety article.

A related article with video is at this other [hyperlink](#).

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Contact: Gary Williamson

☎️ 386-322-3622 or

✉️ garyhere73@gmail.com



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